

Chapter 5

Shore Access and Recreation

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the public access and recreational resources that exist within the Illinois coastal zone, both the Lake Michigan component of the coastal zone and that of the Inland Waterways. Several topics addressed here are important to Illinois coastal zone management. These are:

1. The definition of a beach along the Illinois coast
2. The distinction between public and private beaches along the Illinois coast
3. The location of Illinois coast public beaches

Definition of a Beach

Although it can be easy to get consensus that a beach is a sandy area along the shore, for the purposes of coastal zone management it is important to clearly define what is meant by the term “beach.” The degree of engineering along the Illinois coast requires defining a beach definition specifically for this coast.

An example of how engineering is relevant to the beach definition occurs along the Chicago lakefront. Segments of the Chicago shore are concrete promenades atop revetments with deep water marginal to the revetment. During summer, these promenades have assigned Chicago Park District lifeguards, deepwater swimming is allowed, and the concrete promenade is commonly used for sunbathing. The Chicago Park District and the public have at times referred to these concrete shore segments as “paved beaches.”

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has for the purposes of the ICMP designated a definition of beach specific for the Illinois shore. A beach along the Illinois shore of Lake Michigan is:

the area of unconsolidated material (sand, gravel, pebbles and possibly cobbles), either naturally occurring or artificially placed, that has an upper limit either along the line of permanent vegetation or along the lakeward edge of any coastal structure such as a revetment, bulkhead, breakwater, groin or sidewalk, and a lower limit below water where sand persists across the lake bottom and calm-water depths are no greater than six feet.

This definition of a beach does not rely on whether or not swimming is permissible. Excluding the element of “swimming” from the definition avoids the complication of the seasonal aspect of swimming and recognizes that along some public beaches, for safety reasons, swimming may not be allowed. The depth limit of six feet relates to this commonly being the shallowest depth contour shown on nautical charts (six feet is equivalent to one fathom). The six-foot depth is also the extreme limit to which a very tall person might be able to wade in calm water.

This definition of a beach makes no reference to lake-level elevation. Because the lake level of Lake Michigan is continually in flux, this beach definition means that the width of the beach will vary with changing lake level. Times of higher lake levels will result in narrower beaches; times of lower lake levels will result in wider beaches. This definition also recognizes that some beaches along the Illinois coast, in part or in whole, may exist due to the artificial placement of sand to nourish or create the beach. No distinction is made between artificial (engineered) and “natural” beaches. Because of the abundance of shore protection along the Illinois coast, beaches are not a ubiquitous coastal feature. Some sections of shore may have no beach such as where the lake water directly intercepts a breakwater, bulkhead or revetment and the local shoreline occurs along the structure.

Public beaches are those beach areas that satisfy the above definition and that are owned by a municipal, county, state or federal government. Although public beaches along the Illinois coast typically allow

public access, this does not necessarily mean unrestricted public access. For example, there are permit requirements for access to the southern beach in the South Unit of Illinois Beach State Park as a means to manage human impact in this area of designated nature preserve. In addition, many of the municipal beaches along the North Shore require beach passes, tokens, parking passes or other access controls as a means to manage the beach areas specifically for municipal residents or those from other municipalities willing to pay for the use privilege.

Distinction Between Public and Private Beaches

Public beaches along the Illinois coast are owned by government agencies. In contrast, private beaches along the Illinois coast are owned by riparian owners. Riparian ownership along the Illinois coast occurs predominantly in the North Shore communities (Lake Bluff to Evanston) and also occurs at a few localities along Chicago's far North Side and far South Side lakeshore.

According to Illinois Supreme Court case law (Brundage v. Knox, 1917), along the sections of Illinois coast having riparian ownership, the boundary between public and private ownership is the still-water shoreline. Above (*i.e.*, landward of) the still-water shoreline is private; below (*i.e.*, lakeward of) the stillwater shoreline is public. As the lake level fluctuates and the still-water shoreline shifts landward or lakeward, the boundary line shifts accordingly. The submerged part of the beach—the sandy lake bottom lakeward from the still-water shoreline—always remains in public ownership.

If there is a beach accretion of sand or gravel by natural or artificial means for which the riparian owner is not responsible, that accreted above-water beach area belongs to the riparian owner. The case law does not grant private ownership of any beach area resulting from the entrapment or retention of sand caused by the construction of any type of shore structure. Because of a long history of constructing numerous private groins along the North Shore (Keefe 2002; Shabica *et al.* 2004), there are many such areas of accreted beach. Along these beaches, it is not always possible to determine where the correct boundary line is between private and public ownership. However, any beach area that is artificially accreted beach is legally public.

Distribution of Public Beaches along the Illinois Lake Michigan Shore

Engineering to make lakeshore parkland along the Illinois shore has resulted in much of the public shoreline consisting of revetments or bulkheads that preclude beach area. This is particularly the case along the Chicago and Evanston shore where stepped revetments (Chicago) or rubble-mound revetments (Evanston) extend along the shoreline of much of the lakeshore parks and there is no beach adjacent to these structures. The result is that the Illinois coast has a much greater extent of lakeshore parkland and public space than it does extent of public beach.

The most extensive reach of continuous public beach is six miles along the shore of the North and South Units of Illinois Beach State Park. In contrast, some of the neighborhood, street-end public beaches along Chicago's far north lakeshore and several of the beaches along the filled land of the Chicago lakeshore may have a length no more than several hundred feet.

Figure 5-1 shows the location and name of all public beaches along the Illinois coast and the municipality, state or county government responsible for the beach management. The only public beaches along the Illinois coast under county management occur at Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve, which is land that was the former U.S. Army's Fort Sheridan. The only federal management of beach area occurs at Great Lakes Naval Training Center where beach area is accessible for base personnel but is not accessible to the general public.

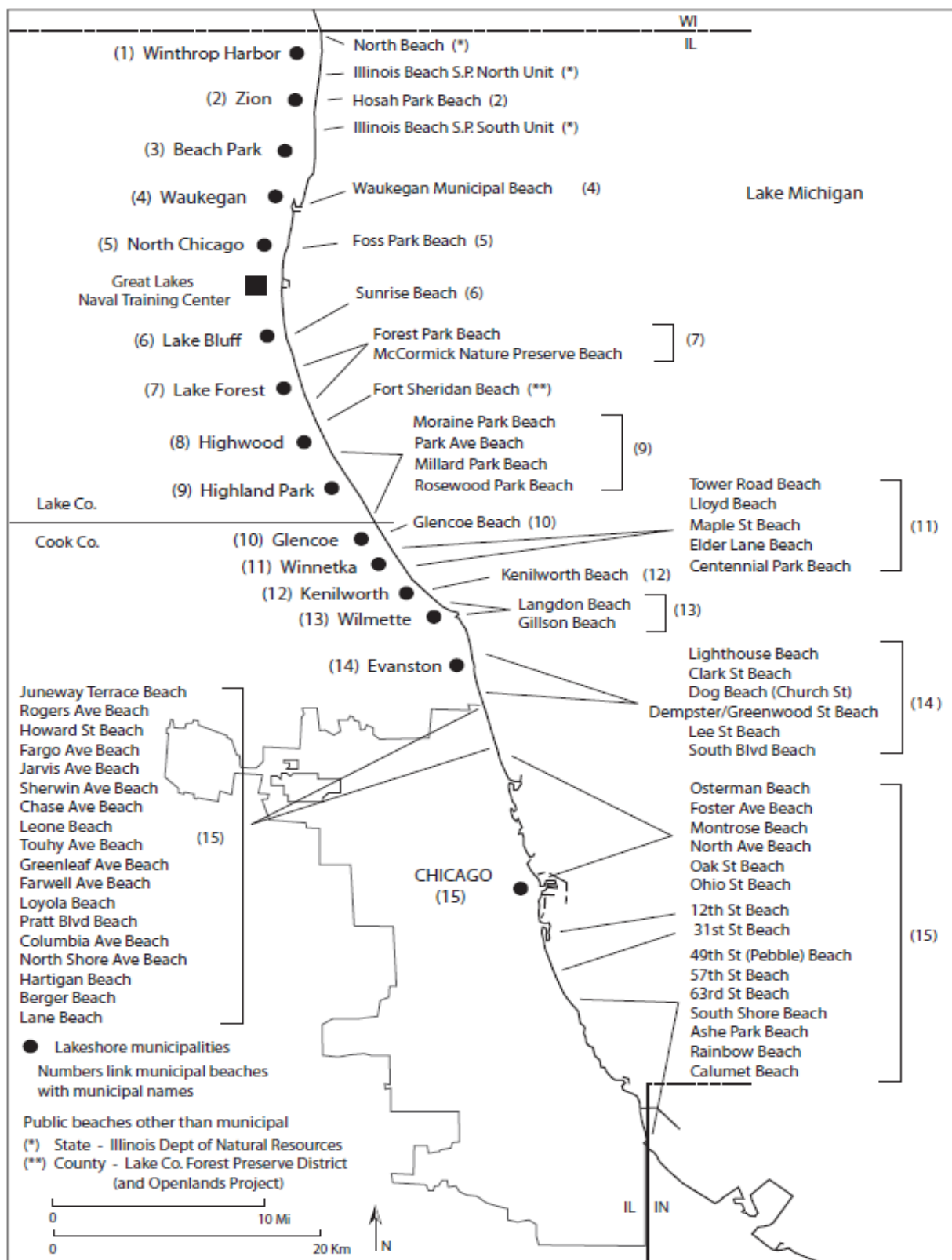


Figure 5-1. Public beaches of the Illinois coast of Lake Michigan associated with each of the fifteen municipalities that are on or near the lakeshore.

As shown in Figure 5-1, the majority of public beaches (33 named beaches) are along the Chicago lakeshore. Evanston has a total of six, Winnetka has five, and Highland Park has four. Both Lake Forest and Wilmette each have two. There are six municipalities with only one public beach (Zion, Waukegan, North Chicago, Lake Bluff, Glencoe and Kenilworth). The three municipalities of Winthrop Harbor, Beach Park and Highwood have no municipal beaches along the lakeshore. For Winthrop Harbor and Beach Park, this is because the lakeshore near these municipalities is state owned and part of North Point Marina and Illinois Beach State Park.

Public Beach-User Fees

The municipal beaches in Zion, Waukegan, North Chicago and Chicago all have unrestricted public access without user fees. In contrast, the municipal beaches of the North Shore communities (Lake Bluff to Evanston) have varied means of managing beach access. A user fee is a common management tool requiring the purchase of a day or season pass (or token) that permits beach use. There is a differential in fee rates for municipal residents and non-residents. Both the City of Waukegan and the City of Lake Forest do not require purchase of beach passes, but both manage access to beach areas by means of parking restrictions.

The beach user fees are a long-standing practice for the North Shore municipalities. The fees provide revenue for staff costs, repairs and maintenance as well as assuring preference for municipal beach use to municipal residents who support these beaches through local taxing. Evanston is notable in having an agreement with the neighboring inland municipality of Skokie allowing Skokie residents to purchase Evanston beach tokens and passes at the resident rate.

Public Beaches along Lake Calumet and Wolf Lake

Wolf Lake has public beach area at the William Powers State Recreation Area (described in a following section). This recreation area includes both land area bordering the lake as well as a major part of the lake's open-water area (Figure 5-2).

No public beaches are present along the shore of Lake Calumet. The majority of the Lake Calumet shoreline is part of the Lake Calumet Harbor complex, officially known as the Senator Dan Dougherty Harbor. The Harbor is managed by the Illinois International Port District. Along the northern shore of Lake Calumet, there is public land at the Harborside International Golf Course and adjacent undeveloped parkland on the east side of the golf course. There are no public beaches along this public land. These shoreline areas are secured as part of the Port District's security plan, which is required by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the U.S. Coast Guard.

Municipal Public Land Bordering the Inland Waterways

In recent decades, the amount of publicly accessible land along the margins of the Inland Waterways has been increasing. Along the Main Stem Chicago River, a river walk continues to be developed. Ping Tom Park on the banks of the South Branch Chicago River in Chicago's Chinatown is an example of new parkland built on a site with a long previous history of railroad use. Canal Origins Park on the South Branch at Ashland Avenue is being developed in recognition of the history of the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Efforts by Evanston, Skokie, and Lincolnwood to construct bike paths and sculpture parks along the land that they lease from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC) on the margins of the North Shore Channel has provided public access and recreation where no public amenities existed through the early and mid 1900s.

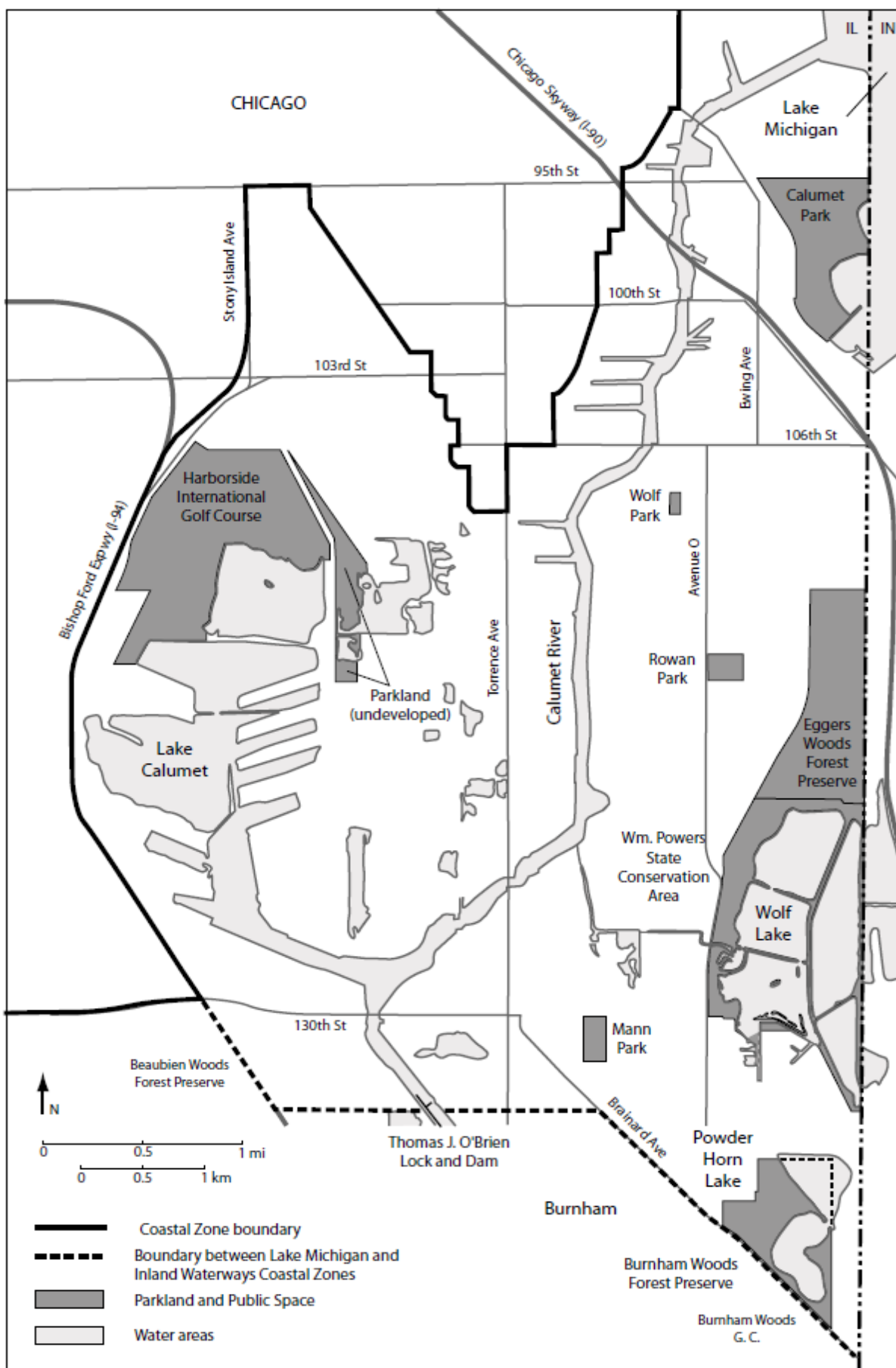


Figure 5-2. Parkland in the Calumet area of the Lake Michigan coastal zone.

Figure 5-3 shows the location and names of municipal (and county) parkland that borders the Inland Waterways. The North Shore Channel and North Branch Chicago River clearly account for the majority of parkland along the Inland Waterways. These parks occupy land owned by the MWRDGC, which leases the land to the municipalities and park districts for park use. The land ownership by MWRDGC relates to the land acquisition by the District (formerly known as the Sanitary District of Chicago) in order to construct the North Shore Channel which was built between 1907 and 1910 (Hill 2000; Solzman 1998). The parkland bordering the North Branch Chicago River downstream from the junction with the North Shore Channel and south to what is now California Park (Belmont Avenue) relates to land acquisition by the District associated with straightening this segment of the river between 1904 and 1907.

Parkland along the MWRDGC's land bordering the North Shore Channel and far north segment of the North Branch Chicago River consists of a series of long and narrow parcels that are segmented by arterial street crossings, railroad right-of-ways, or a few parcels of industrial/commercial land. However, other than these relatively narrow disruptions, a nearly continuous park corridor exists from the origin of the North Shore Channel in Wilmette for approximately nine miles southward to California Park on Chicago's north side. This is an exceptional intra-urban greenway touching on five municipalities (Wilmette, Evanston, Skokie, Lincolnwood, and Chicago).

The other coastal zone parks along the Chicago River system (Chicago River Walk, Ping Tom Memorial Park, and Canal Origins Park), have all come into being in recent decades and to varying degrees are still being developed. The limitations on public access along the river bank along the lower North Branch, Main Stem and South Branch Chicago River is related to the history of commercial, industrial, and transportation land uses along these river margins. These segments of the river do not have a history of MWRDGC land acquisition as occurred farther upstream along the North Shore Channel and upper North Branch.

Along the coastal zone segments of the Little and Grand Calumet Rivers, public land is primarily owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. The only municipal park occurring here is Burnham Park on the Grand Calumet River in the Village of Burnham. The Forest Preserve District land includes forested land, grassed open areas, and golf courses.

Public Access along the Coastal Ravines

The ravines of the Far North and North Shore Coasts are predominately in private ownership across the ravine slopes, but commonly include municipal easements for stormwater pipes or channels along the ravine bottom. There is no public access to the majority of the ravine system. However, numerous municipal and county parks along select segments of the ravine system provide access into these distinct and picturesque landscape features.

Along the Far North coast (i.e., Winthrop Harbor, Zion, Beach Park, Waukegan and North Chicago), the ravines do not typically have as much relief as those along the North Shore. However, because of the more landward watershed boundary, these more northern ravines extend two miles or more inland from the coast as opposed to the ravines of the North Shore which are half or less in landward extent. Notable parkland along the ravines of the Far North coast includes Beulah Park in Zion and Bowen, Powell, Washington and Roosevelt Parks in Waukegan.

Parkland along the ravines of the North Shore is typically parkland associated with municipal beaches. The ravines commonly provide the route for access roads between the beach and upland. Moraine Park in

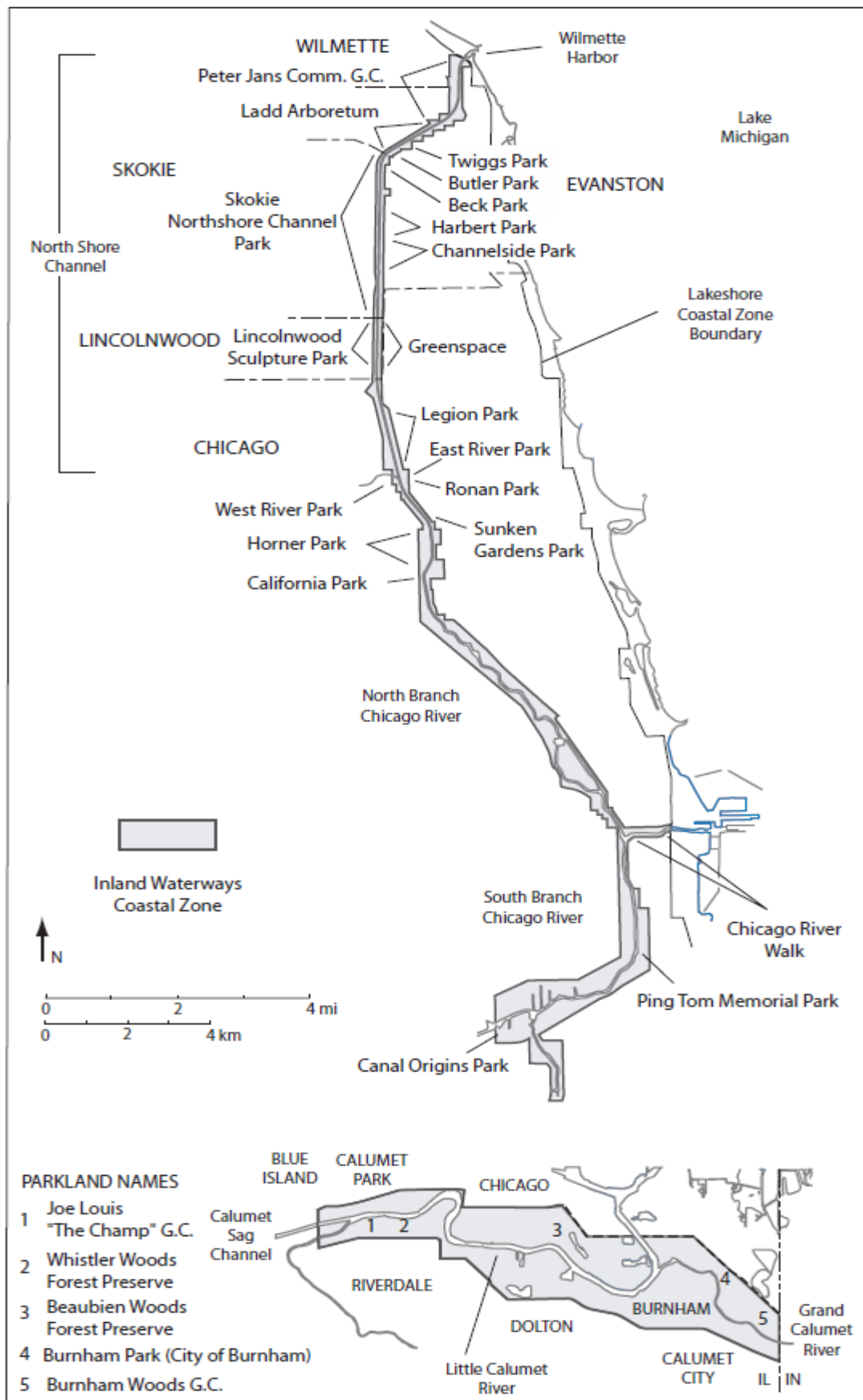


Figure 5-3. Named parks and public space within the limits of the Inland Waterways coastal zone.

Highland Park is notable for restricting vehicle access to the upland and having only trails into and through the local ravine. The access roads to both the north and south ends of Forest Park Beach in Lake Forest occur within local ravines. The access road to Rosewood Park Beach in southern Highland Park (Figure 5-1) traverses nearly a quarter mile along the lower reach of a ravine. Ravine Drive, which is the access road to Highland Park's Millard Beach, similarly traverses a ravine.

Preserved at the Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve District are Janes Ravine, a very high-quality ravine, and Hutchinson Ravine. Janes Ravine includes one of the last remaining examples of mesic and dry-mesic upland forests that once dominated and distinguished the North Shore ravines. Bartlett Ravine, another high-quality ravine in a mostly natural condition at the former Fort Sheridan property, is owned by Openlands as part of the Openlands Lakeshore Preserve. Openlands will ultimately take ownership of two other ravines at the former Fort Sheridan property—Schenck and Van Horne Ravines. A sixth ravine at the former Army base was used as a landfill by the U.S. Army and is presently capped and owned by the U.S. Navy.

State-Managed Coastal Zone Parks and Recreation Areas

Two state-owned and state-managed parkland areas occur within the boundaries of the Illinois coastal zone. These are located at the north and south extremes of the coastal zone. These two locations comprise a total of 3650 acres.

Illinois Beach State Park/North Point Marina

Located at the far northern reach of the Illinois coast and bordering the Wisconsin state line, this state coastal land consists of a total of 3070 acres in the state park, and an additional 140 acres at North Point Marina, of which about 70 acres accounts for the water area of the 1500-slip marina basin. Although the state park is commonly referred to simply as Illinois Beach State Park, based on an act of the Illinois legislature, the complete park name is now Adeline Jay Geo-Karis Illinois Beach State Park. The state park and marina together comprise what is known as the Bill Cullerton Complex. Both the state park and marina are managed by the IDNR.

William W. Powers State Recreation Area

Located in the far southern part of the Illinois coastal zone (Figure 5-2), this parkland owned and managed by the IDNR borders Wolf Lake and extends to the Indiana state line. This recreation area, totally within the corporate limits of Chicago, includes a total of 580 acres of which 419 acres are open-water area and 161 acres are land marginal to the lake. This is a popular picnic and fishing site.

County-Managed Coastal Zone Parkland and Public Areas

Both the Lake County Forest Preserve District and the Cook County Forest Preserve District have land areas within or partially within the boundaries of the Illinois coastal zone. These Forest Preserve facilities and the municipalities within which they are located are as follows:

Lake County Forest Preserve District

Location

Spring Bluff Forest Preserve
Thunderhawk Golf Club
Lyons Woods Forest Preserve
Greenbelt Forest Preserve
Fort Sheridan Forest Preserve

Winthrop Harbor
Beach Park
Waukegan
Waukegan
Former Fort Sheridan

Cook County Forest Preserve District

Eggers Woods Forest Preserve Chicago	Chicago
Whistler Woods Forest Preserve Riverdale (Including Joe Lewis "The Champ" Golf Course)	Riverdale
Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve Chicago	Chicago
Burnham Woods Forest Preserve Burnham (Including Burnham Woods Golf Course)	Burnham

Boating Access along the Lake Michigan Shore

The small-boat harbors along the Illinois coast are primarily concentrated along the Chicago lakeshore (Cook County) and along the Far North lakeshore at North Point Marina and Waukegan (Lake County). Other than Wilmette Harbor in Wilmette, there is an absence of small-boat harbors along the North Shore from Lake Bluff south to Evanston. However, several of the municipalities along the North Shore have boat-launching facilities consisting of lifts and/or ramps at one of their lakeshore parks. They also provide for beach launching of shallow-draft sailboats. Although the harbor at Great Lakes Naval Training Center is restricted for use by naval-station personnel, this large harbor complex includes boat launching and harbor moorage for small boats. The only commercial facilities along the Illinois Lake Michigan shore for recreational launching, mooring and storage occur in the inner part of Waukegan Harbor (Larsen Marine Service) and at North Point Marina (Skipper Buds).

Figure 5-4 shows the distribution of public marinas and small-boat harbors as well as the locations of public boat launching facilities. The following list of the marinas and small-boat harbors identifies the authority responsible for managing these facilities.

Lake County Marinas and Small-Boat Harbors

North Point Marina	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Waukegan Marina	Waukegan Port District
Great Lakes Harbor	Great Lakes Naval Training Center – U.S. Navy*
(*not a public facility, but offers emergency refuge)	

Cook County Marinas and Small-Boat Harbors

Wilmette Harbor	Wilmette Harbor Association (public/private)
Montrose Harbor	Chicago Park District
Belmont Harbor	Chicago Park District
Diversey Harbor	Chicago Park District
DuSable Harbor	Chicago Park District
Monroe Harbor	Chicago Park District
Burnham Harbor	Chicago Park District
59 th Street Harbor	Chicago Park District
Jackson Park Harbors (Inner and Outer Harbor)	Chicago Park District

Commercial marinas exist along the Calumet River and provide direct access to Lake Michigan by way of the river mouth, which opens to Calumet Harbor. No public marinas are present along the Calumet River. No public or commercial marinas occur at Lake Calumet.

The marinas along the Illinois coast provide for 7,857 slips/moorings (2007 data). Of this total, the Lake County segment of coast has 2,483 (32%) and the Cook County segment has 5,374 (68%). Prior to the 1980s, essentially all of the recreational moorage along the Illinois coast was along the Cook County

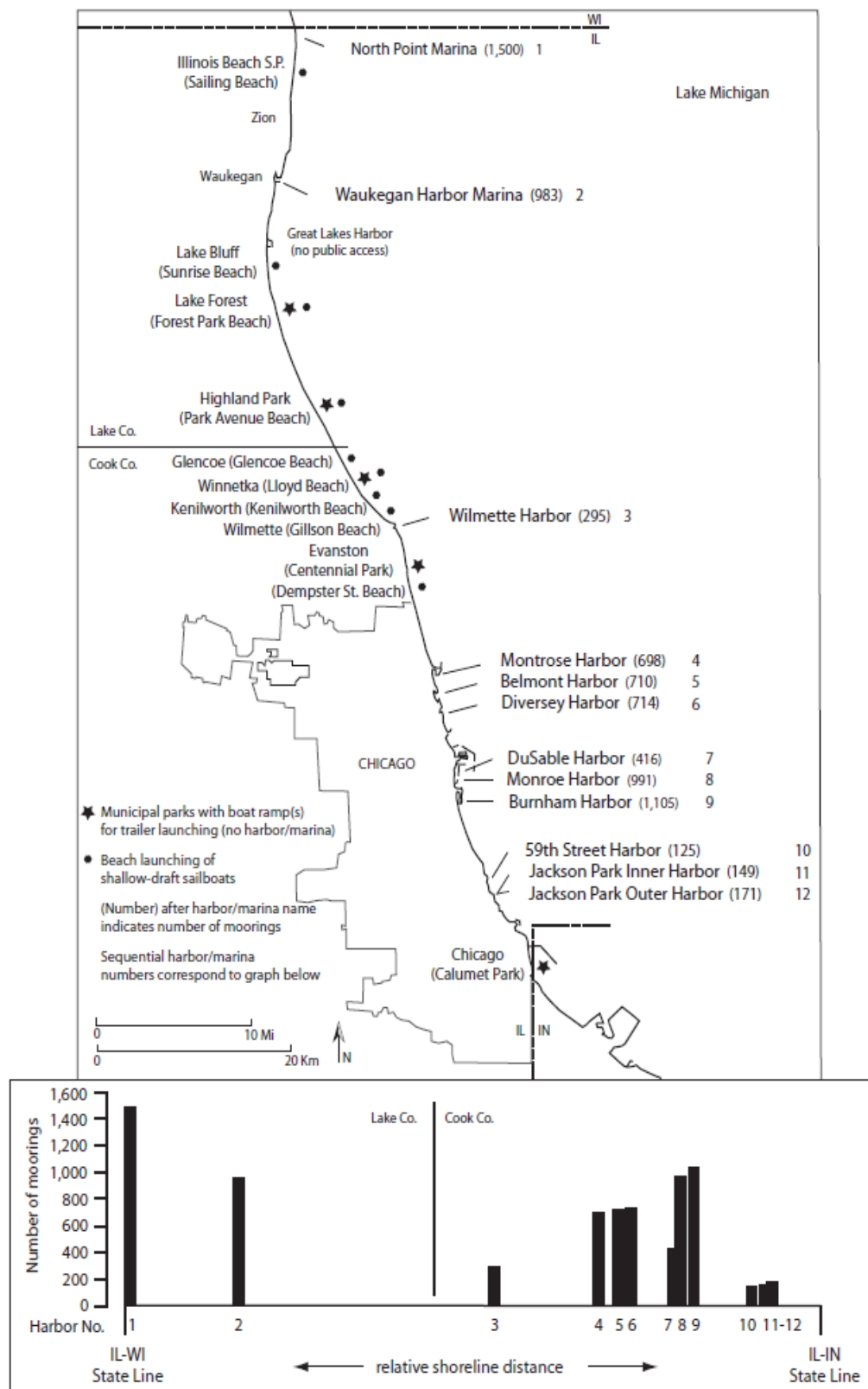


Figure 5-4. Locations of twelve recreational harbors/marinas along the Illinois coast, municipal boat-launch facilities without harbors, and beaches designated for beach launching of sailboats. Graph compares the mooring capacity of the twelve harbors/marinas.

segment and, other than the moorage at Wilmette Harbor, the majority of the Cook County moorings were at the small boat harbors along the Chicago lakeshore. Wilmette Harbor is identified here as a public/private facility because this is a public waterway but the harbor operations are managed by a private (membership; not-for-profit) harbor association.

Boating Access along the Inland Waterways

The North Branch and South Branch Chicago River and the Little Calumet River each have commercial boat yards along the riverbanks that provide boating services, boat storage and launching. These commercial facilities play a major role in the launching, retrieval and winter storage of many of the recreational boats that moor through the boating season in the small-boat harbors along the Chicago lakeshore. The Chicago harbors have ramps for trailer launching of small power and sailboats, but the large power and sailboats require the lift equipment that exists at the marinas along the Inland Waterways. The Inland Waterways thus have an important role as gateway for boating access to Lake Michigan.

In contrast to the abundance of private marinas and launch facilities, public boat-launch facilities along the Inland Waterways are minimal. Within the coastal zone limits of the Inland Waterways, no public boat ramps exist along the North or South Branches of the Chicago River, or the Main Stem. Along the North Shore Channel, there are no public or commercial facilities for powerboat launching. However, a facility for canoe and kayak launching (Thomas J. Dammrich Rowing Center) has been built in Skokie by the Skokie Park District (at Oakton Street).

The Inland Waterway segment of the Little Calumet River has two public boat launch facilities that are part of Forest Preserve District parkland bordering the river. Both facilities are maintained by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. These boat-launching facilities occur at Beaubien Woods Forest Preserve and at the western margin of the Joe Louis “The Champ” Golf Course (Little Calumet Boating Center). No boat launching occurs along the Grand Calumet River.

Boating between the Inland Waterways and Lake Michigan requires transit through either the Chicago Lock for the Chicago River system, or the O’Brien Lock for the Little Calumet River. Both locks are operated by the USACE Chicago District. In the early 1900s, there was provision for weekend passage of small boats through the Wilmette Lock located at the north end of the North Shore Channel. This lockage allowed recreational boating between the channel and Lake Michigan (Hill 2000). Although this lock still exists, it has not been operational for several decades, and no boat passage occurs at the Wilmette Lock.

Lake Michigan Underwater Parks

Recreational diving is a popular sport along the Illinois coast. Several designated sites occur off the Chicago lakeshore and provide diving suited for beginning as well as advanced divers. The Rachel Carson Scuba Park is an IDNR approved underwater park located about three miles offshore from Chicago’s 59th Street Harbor in about 35 feet of water. The site offers the opportunity to dive on a World War II torpedo bomber-training plane. Other designated dive sites include the wreck of the MV Straits of Mackinaw, which is a 200-foot car and passenger ferry, and the wreck of the Holly Barge, which is a 120-foot barge. These dive sites are maintained by various diving foundations and associations.

Planning and Management Challenges

The residents of Lake and Cook Counties in Illinois have the benefit of numerous locations that provide access to the Lake Michigan shore. There is also the benefit of a variety of recreational opportunities and the in-place infrastructure that many of these recreational opportunities require. However, there are considerable planning and management challenges to reach the full potential of public access and recreation along the Illinois coastal zone.

Four elements of planning and management are important in the effort to address public access and recreation. These are:

- Maintaining existing access and recreation opportunities
- Enhancing existing access and recreation opportunities
- Identifying potential new access and recreation venues
- Planning for new access and recreation

Maintaining Existing Access and Recreation

Maintaining existing access and recreation along the coastal zone is prudent coastal stewardship. This involves the repairs and maintenance needed to counter naturally occurring aging and deterioration. Walkways, shore-protection structures, lighting and landscaping are only a few examples of the numerous items that will require periodic repairs and maintenance. This attention must be planned for and efficiently executed.

Areas that border existing access and recreation sites may have new construction, land-use changes, or changes in vehicular or pedestrian traffic flow that can have an indirect negative influence on existing coastal zone access and recreation. In an urban setting, such as nearly all the Illinois coastal zone, changes on the urban landscape are continual and can be rapid. Without consideration of potential impacts to coastal access and recreation, negative impacts can occur. The challenge exists for assuring the necessary communication and planning to avoid any detrimental impacts.

The agencies responsible for maintaining existing access and recreation along the Illinois coast and the inland waterways are diverse and span municipal, county, state, and federal government. Within a specific level of government, there may also be several different offices involved. For example, along a municipal beach there may be different access and recreation responsibilities for the municipal park district and the municipal engineering office. Identification of responsible agency or agencies must be determined on a site-by-site basis.

Enhancing Existing Access and Recreation

There is a continuing need to plan for and implement enhancements to existing access and recreation. Access in compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990) is necessary. There is also the need to assure that access is equitable across the entire age spectrum from youth to senior citizen. Although beaches and lakeshore parks in Chicago can be accessed by an exceptional system of public transportation, the same cannot be true for the municipal beaches and lakeshore parks in the majority of the North Shore municipalities. Many of the North Shore municipal beaches are also of limited size, and efforts to expand municipal beach area would be beneficial to the beach users.

Signage is an important component of access and, in some coastal locations with a high proportion of Hispanic users, it is necessary to have multilingual signage in both English and Spanish. In a diverse urban setting such as Chicago, the potential exists for some specific coastal locations that are frequented by a large percentage of users other than English or Spanish speaking, and additional signage in other languages might be useful for safety or security.

The enhancement of existing access and recreation can have a variety of facets such as increasing user capacity, updating infrastructure, and improving site landscaping and/or aesthetics. In some cases, the enhancement of either access or recreation may not be mutually achievable. For example, the enhancement of a coastal area as a natural area may require restrictions on the type of access. Alternatively, enhancing recreation such as having beach areas designated for landing by Jet Ski users or other small watercraft may require limited or restricted use as a swimming beach. The necessary planning for enhancement of access and recreation resources needs to assure that there is appropriate balance across user interests.

Identifying Potential New Access and Recreation Venues

One of the greatest success stories in creating new access and recreation along the Illinois coast has been the redevelopment of Chicago's Navy Pier. What in the late 1980s was abandoned dock space and deteriorated buildings has been transformed into the most popular tourist destination along the Illinois shore as well as the entire state. The Pier has become home to several dinner cruise boats, theatres, dining establishments, conference centers, and specialty shops.

Navy Pier is an example of creating a new access and recreation venue specifically suited for the urban setting of the central Chicago lakeshore. The wider application of the example of the Navy Pier success is the opportunity to redevelop former commercial, industrial or transportation-related land for public access and recreation. Some of the greatest opportunities for identifying such new access and recreation venues occur in Chicago near the mouth of the Calumet River, along the Calumet River, and along the shore of Lake Calumet. Additional opportunities exist along the Inland Waterways. In Lake County, there is also significant opportunity for new access and recreational venues along former industrial and commercial land along the lakeshore at Waukegan and North Chicago.

In contrast to the "urban" access and recreation demonstrated by Navy Pier, there is also the opportunity for identifying new access and recreation venues that emphasize natural areas, greater non-fee access to the shoreline, and ecological improvements to existing recreation venues. An option is to identify methods of creating incentives for individual private landowners to allow access to, or at least across, their stretch of private beach. Incentives could include provision of additional policing, regular beach clean ups at no cost to the landowner, property tax breaks, and other options.

Commercial and industrial activities will have a long-term future in the Lake Calumet area and along most of the Inland Waterways. Commercial water transportation is an important economic factor along these waters. In addition, there is a long-term future for the Inland Waterways to continue to have a primary role in regional wastewater management. However, there are also untapped opportunities for access and recreation marginal to and along these water areas. The Chicago River system of the Inland Waterways (*i.e.*, North Shore Channel, and North, South and Main Stem Chicago River) has unique opportunities because of its geography traversing to and from the heart of Chicago's central business district. The coastal zone corridor along the Little and Grand Calumet Rivers has opportunities because of the abundance of Forest Preserve District land that may have potential for new access and recreation.

Planning For New Access and Recreation

Lake Michigan is an asset to all residents of Illinois whether they live in Lake or Cook Counties or in any of the inland counties. Future population growth in the Chicago metropolitan area requires that there be an increase in public lakeshore access to meet this population growth. New access and recreation resources will continue to be in demand, as there is continuing growth in an urban population interested in water-related recreational activities. The growing popularity of canoe and kayak recreation along the Inland Waterways is just one example of this growing interest. There is also interest in further interfacing the Illinois lakeshore and the Inland Waterways into the plan for the Northeastern Illinois Regional Water Trails (Openlands Project 2007). The challenge will be to do the necessary planning such that access and associated infrastructure are in place to meet the growth and increased demand for lakeshore access and recreation.

ICMP Integration into Existing IDNR Access and Recreation Planning Processes

The IDNR has numerous programs available to assist with recreational improvements and projects, including recreational trails and public access. The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program and the state Open Space Lands Acquisition and Development (OSLAD) program are Illinois' general-purpose outdoor recreation grant programs. They have comparable objectives and both programs are managed by the IDNR with concurrent application due dates, equal grant maximums and similar general rules. The other IDNR outdoor recreation grant programs are the Recreational Trails Program,

including the Bicycle Path Grant Program, Snowmobile Trail Establishment Fund, Off-Highway Vehicle Recreational Trails Program, Federal Recreational Trails Program, Local Government Snowmobile Grant Program, and the Boat Access Development Grant Program.

Illinois' outdoor recreation needs and priorities are identified in the IDNR's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which is prepared as a five-year document required to maintain Illinois' eligibility to participate in the LWCF program. The OSLAD program is limited to local units of government for the acquisition of land and development of facilities for outdoor recreation. In December 2009, the IDNR completed the 2009-2014 SCORP, providing an assessment of Illinois residents' outdoor recreation needs; inventories of the state's outdoor recreation resources; and identifying the changing ways that people recreate in the outdoors. It set the following priorities for LWCF and OSLAD funding:

- Conservation of Natural Resources
- Children in the Outdoors
- Greenways and Trails
- Revitalized Lands
- Water Resources
- Special Populations
- Healthy People and Communities
- Interagency Cooperation and Coordination

The LWCF and OSLAD programs represent a successful partnership among federal, state and local governments. These programs assist in providing local agencies, such as park districts, municipalities, forest preserve districts, the needed, close-to-home outdoor recreation lands and facilities. Local partners play a critical role in the management and protection of the state's natural and recreational resources and further the public's understanding and appreciation of the state's natural resources through conservation education facilities and programs. The IDNR Office of Realty and Environmental Planning (OREP) is responsible for outdoor recreation planning, program administration and project planning/coordination, and for acquiring all real estate used by the IDNR for recreation, bikeway, natural areas, wildlife habitat, waterfowl, greenways and open space programs. OREP provides real estate appraisal and acquisition assistance to the IDNR grant programs and provides technical assistance related to land issues to other IDNR Offices.

The ICMP has similar objectives and priorities. The ICMP and OREP will provide interagency interaction and communication to build upon and coordinate better coastal recreational and public access planning. The ICMP also offers a means to provide grant assistance for the planning of new coastal access and recreation, with an emphasis to a broader aspect of regional planning. Exchange of grant proposals and inventories of project needs will take place annually. This exchange can be used to identify opportunities and needs best suited to the constraints of the programs. This interagency coordination will also benefit the local agencies.

Chapter 5 - References

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